

CHICHESTER IN THE GREAT WAR

Lieutenant Edward Humphry Tyacke, 6.8.1896-29.5.1918
Nicholas Shaw

Introduction

Edward Humphry Tyacke's name was recently observed on a brass plaque inside the Cathedral at Chichester, and I wanted to explore his connection with the City of Chichester. He was killed in action, near Rheims on 29th May 1918, aged just 21 years old.

Biography

Edward Humphry Tyacke was born at 3 Westgate, in Chichester on 6th August 1896. He was the second eldest child and eldest son of George Ashley Tyacke and Alice Margaret Tyacke (née Allcard), daughter of George Allcard of Bickley.

His grandfather was called Nicholas Tyacke and was born at Godophin in Cornwall in 1812 and went on to be educated at Bodmin County School and Edinburgh University, also studying medicine in Paris, Rome, Florence, Milan and other continental centres. After taking his degree of Doctor of Medicine at Edinburgh in 1836, he gained further experience in Paris and Berlin and at Guy's and St Thomas' hospitals. In 1840, after a year's practice in Exeter, he settled in Chichester and was at once elected to the staff of the West Sussex, East Hants and Chichester Infirmary, with which he remained associated for the rest of his life. He was twice Mayor of Chichester. He was the father of several children by his two marriages. He married firstly Frances Ann Freeland (26.7.1817 – died 1861) on 26th June 1844 at St Martin in the Fields, London. In 1863 he secondly married Elizabeth Merricks Buckton (1817-1898).

The sixth eldest child was called George Ashley Tyacke and he was born on 23rd April 1854. He was christened on 21st May 1854 at St Olave, Chichester. His mother was Frances Ann Freeland. George Ashley lived at 8 Thistle Grove Lane, Kensington, London in 1881. By the 1901 census, George Ashley and his wife had conceived four children, and Edward Humphry was the second oldest child and eldest son. He had been a solicitor since 1877, practising in London until 1890 and since then at Chichester (Messrs. Raper, Freeland and Tyacke). The Solicitor's office was at 55 West Street, Chichester.

Edward Tyacke came to Winchester College from Mr. A. E. Clarke's School in Bexhill and attended from September 1909 to December 1914.



He left early to join the Army and after a year in 8th Battalion, Border Regiment, was transferred in December 1915 to the Machine Gun Corps. He went to France in the following June; he was severely wounded in July, and was not permitted to return to the front until April 1918, when he was appointed Signals Officer to 25th Battalion, Machine Gun Corps (the Machine Gun Battalion of 25th Division). He was slightly gassed on May 4th, but re-joined his Battalion after a few days.

On May 27th the German offensive in Champagne began, leading to the Battle of Aisne. He fell at Montigny-sur-Vesle, near Rheims, on May 29th 1918, aged 21, and is commemorated on the Soissons Memorial (see Commonwealth War Graves Commission: www.cwgc.org) He is also commemorated on the War Memorial at Chichester (The Litten Gardens, St Pancras Road). At the time of his death Edward had been living in Westgate, Chichester and left effects of £748 1s 2d.

His family placed a brass plaque inside Chichester Cathedral and it reads as follows:

“In Loving Memory of Lieutenant Edward Humphry Tyacke of Westgate Chichester. Signal Officer 25th Battalion Machine Gun Corps formerly of the 8th Border Regiment. Severely wounded at Armentieres July 1916. Killed in Action at the Vesle River near Rheims. May 28th 1918, Aged 21”.

Conclusion

Edward Humphry Tyacke’s name is one of the few soldiers to be found on a memorial plaque inside Chichester Cathedral. His family were very influential and seem to have played an important role in the administrative organisation of the City of Chichester, his grandfather had been a Mayor and his father a leading solicitor in the city. Edward died aged 21, whilst being a dutiful officer in charge of his men at Montigny-sur-Vesle.

School Notes

He was in C House (Du Boulay’s House) and his house master was Mr Little. He played fives as a junior, rowed a little for his House IV and played in his House soccer team. He was also musical and he features in the school magazine when he performed in concerts. He was confirmed in December 1911.

Sources

www.winchestercollegeatwar.com Winchester College Website

www.ancestry.co.uk (Family details)

www.cwgc.org (Cemetery details)

Kew Archives: WO339/5392

